

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A printing system for printing information received by a user via the Internet, comprising:

an information sending apparatus operable to provide information via the Internet;

a terminal unit for receiving said information provided by said information sending apparatus and operable to print said information with a printer; and

a printing managing apparatus operable to obtain a printing cost for printing said information by said printer and to compensate a user for said printing cost, said printing managing apparatus compensating a user for said printing cost by charging said printing cost to said information sending apparatus, and said printing managing apparatus charging said printing cost to said information sending apparatus by means of a point having substantially the same value as said printing cost, said point being usable on the Internet.

2. A printing system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said information provided by said information providing system is an advertisement, and said point is provided when said advertisement is printed.

3. A printing system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said point is electronic money.

4. A printing system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said point is applied as payment to replenish consumable items of said printer.

5. A printing system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said printer includes a print certifying unit operable to issue an electronic certificate for certifying that said printer has printed said

information satisfactorily, and

said printing managing apparatus includes a point certifying unit operable to certify said electronic certificate issued by said print certifying unit.

6. A printing system as claimed in claim 5, wherein said print certifying unit encrypts said electronic certificate, and

said point certifying unit decrypts said encrypted electronic certificate.

7. A printing system as claimed in claim 6, wherein said printing managing apparatus determines whether or not a version of encryption software for encrypting said electronic certificate is the newest, and allows said encryption software to be updated when said version of said encryption software is not the newest.

8. A printing system as claimed in claim 5, wherein said printer includes a printing monitoring unit operable to monitor whether or not said printing of said information has been finished satisfactorily, and

said print certifying unit issues said electronic certificate when said printing monitoring unit determines that said printing of said information has been finished satisfactorily.

9. A printing system as claimed in claim 5, wherein said printing monitoring unit detects a type of paper to be used for said printing, and

said print certifying unit issues said electronic certificate when said printing monitoring unit determines that said type of paper is a predetermined type of paper.

10. A printing system as claimed in claim 9, wherein said printing managing apparatus includes a user database with a printing

said print certifying unit issues said electronic certificate when said printing monitoring unit determines that said type of paper is a type of paper registered in said user database.

11. A printing system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said terminal unit is operable to print information other than said information for which said printing cost is compensated, and to select whether or not said other information is added to said information for which said printing cost is compensated.

12. A printing system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said printing managing apparatus includes an identifying-information providing unit operable to add a user ID for specifying a user of said terminal unit and printing identifying information, which specifies the contents of said information, to said information, said printer prints said user ID and said printing identifying information as well as said information, and said printing managing apparatus obtains said user ID and said printing identifying information via the Internet to record said user ID and said printing identifying information therein.

13. A printing system as claimed in claim 5, wherein said printing managing apparatus includes a user database in which a printing environment of said printer is stored for each user and a printing cost calculating unit operable to calculate said printing cost based on the contents of said user database and said electronic certificate.

14. A printing system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said printing managing apparatus includes a printing history database having a printing history for each user, and restricts a number of sheets printed in a predetermined period for a user so as not to exceed

a predetermined limit.

15. A printing system as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a consumable ordering apparatus operable to make said terminal unit find a remaining amount of consumable items of said printer and to place an order for said consumable items based on said remaining amount of said consumable items,

wherein said point is applicable as payment for said ordered consumable items.

09033737 041304